

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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R 121453Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2426

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONGEN ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ANKARA 1171

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, TU

SUBJECT: DEMIREL BUDGET APPROVED BY SENATE

REF ANKARA 1090

1. THE TURKISH SENATE APPROVED THE DEMIREL GOVERNMENT BUDGET FEBRUARY 11 BY A VOTE OF 95 TO 67. THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WILL BEGIN DEBATING THE BUDGET FEBRUARY 16 AND MUST COMPLETE ACTION NO LATER THAN MARCH 1.

2. THE SENATE VOTE IS ESSENTIALLY MEANINGLESS AS THE SENATE DOES NOT HAVE THE POWER TO IMPEDE ENACTMENT OF BUDGET LEGISLATION. THE REAL TEST WILL COME IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WHERE THE VOTE ON THE BUDGET IS TRADITIONALLY CONSIDERED A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN THE ADMINISTRATION. THE OPPOSITION REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) IS EXPECTED TO MAKE A STRONG EFFORT TO DEFEAT THE BILL, BUT FROM ALL INDICATIONS, HAS LITTLE CHANCE TO DO SO.

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3. IN OTHER PARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITY, THE GOVERNMENT COALITION

APPARENTLY OUT-MANEUVURED THE RPP TO GAIN A DELAY IN THE FORMATION OF JOINT SENATE-ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES OF INQUIRY TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATIONS INTO ALLEGED MALFEASANCES BY PRIMIN DEMIREL AND OTHER CABINET MINISTERS (REFTEL). FORMATION OF THESE COMMITTEES CAN ONLY BE APPROVED BY A JOINT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT AND NO JOINT SESSION CAN BE HELD WHILE EITHER CHAMBER IS DEBATING THE BUDGET. ACCORDINGLY, THE RPP HAD HOPED TO CALL FOR A JOINT SESSION DURING THE PERIOD BETWEEN SENATE PASSAGE AND THE BEGINNING OF THE BUDGET DEBATE IN THE ASSEMBLY. HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT COALITION PARTIES APPEAR TO HAVE ADROITLY FOILED THIS POSSIBILITY BY RECESSING THE SENATE UNTIL FEB 24. NEVERTHELESS, ASSEMBLY SPEAKER KEMAL GUVEN (OF THE RPP), THE PRESIDING OFFICER AT JOINT SESSIONS, HAS CALLED FOR A JOINT SESSION ON FEBRUARY 13; HOWEVER, IT APPEARS LIKELY THE GOVERNMENT PARTIES WILL NOT ATTEND AND THUS PREVENT A QUORUM.

4. THE RPP (WHICH HAS MADE A PARLIAMENTARY INVESTIGATION OF DEMIREL AND HIS CABINET ITS PRINCIPAL TACTIC TO BRING DOWN THE GOVERNMENT) WILL THEN BE FORCED TO WAIT UNTIL THE FIRST WEEK OF MARCH TO SEEK FORMATION OF THE INQUIRY COMMITTEES.
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